

DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES,  
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24. A NOTE ON SPECIES NAMED *LYCAENA PAVANA*  
(LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE)

Wynter-Blyth (1957: 301) has given the distribution of a lycaenid butterfly *Lycaena pavana* Horsfield as Kashmir to Kumaon. This is partially incorrect. There are in reality two separate species, which have been named '*Lycaena pavana*' at different periods of time.

Horsfield (1828: 77) described a small butterfly from Java and named it *Lycaena pavana*. It has a 26-28 mm wing span. Subsequently, it was recorded from Tavoy, S. Burma and Andamans, with 'not rare' status (Evans 1932). This species was brought under the genus *Nacaduba* by Wood-Mason & de Niceville in 1886 and referred to as such in the 3rd vol. of BUTTERFLIES OF INDIA, BURMA & CEYLON (de Niceville 1890: 145). Later, Corbet (1938) described a new subspecies of it from Singapore, and this *Nacaduba pavana singapura* is now considered the subspecies found in Assam, Burma, Andamans and Malaya (Cantlie 1962: 75). This species has been recently placed in the subgenus *Rapsidia* by Sibatani (1974: 109), though he wrongly

gave Evans as the author of the species.

Kollar (1948: 416) in Huegel described another lycaenid butterfly as *Polyommatus pavana* from the Western Himalayas. It was published in Huegel's series, in German, on "Kashmir" Part 2 of vol. 4 meant for 1844 and appeared in 1848. This species of Kollar was transferred to genus *Chrysophanus* by Horsfield & Moore in 1857 and referred to as such by de Niceville (1890: 317). This butterfly is a little larger than the *pavana* of Horsfield, its wing span being 37-40 mm, and its range of occurrence is recorded in literature as from Kashmir to Kumaon where it is 'common' in status. Since as early as 1871 Kirby, brought this species into the genus *Lycaena*, both Evans (1932) and Cantlie (1962) have cited it as *Lycaena pavana*.

Thus, what was initially called *Lycaena pavana* is now a species of *Nacaduba*, and what was initially *Polyommatus pavana* is now referred to as *Lycaena pavana*, in well-known works on Indian butterflies.

However, on further study it was revealed that Kollar misidentified his new species as *pavana* of Horsfield, with the result that his new species had no valid name of its own. In 1852, Westwood gave it a new name as *Thecla panava* (note 'nava' in the place of 'vana'). Thus, as per nomenclature rules, Westwood's epithet is the oldest available name applied to this species and accordingly it is its valid name, now under *Lycaena*.

To conclude, at least during 1871 to 1886 there were two different species having the same name — *Lycaena pavana*. But presently both species are not called *Lycaena pavana*, as shown below. Besides it is evident that *Lycaena pavana* of Horsfield does not occur from Kashmir to Kumaon.

The two species may be briefly separated as follows (character details may be seen in Cantlie, 1962):

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White bordered; prominent white band on underside of hindwing; female having basal half wing dark brown; Forewing length from base to apex 18.5-20 mm *Range* — Kashmir to Kumaon, Nainital, Almora, Nepal [and Garhwal: new record]; Common name — 'White-bordered Copper' .....*Lycaena panava* (Westwood)  
Comparatively smaller specimens with pale violet blue wings; underside markings broad and all bands white; forewing length from base to apex 13-14 mm. *Range* — Java, Singapore, Burma, Sikkim, Bhutan, Assam and Andaman Is. Common name — 'Small Four Lineblue'.....  
.....*Nacaduba pavana* (Horsfield)

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